

Thoughts on why Gallup has an excessively high crime rate!

Written by Gallupsun Staff
Friday, 27 July 2018 09:07

First, I would like to express my respect for the men and women of the Gallup Police Department. They act and perform professionally and with courtesy, I have a high regard for these individuals. My wife (former business owner) and I called upon them for their investigative services at least nine times between November 23, 2017 and May 26, 2018. On at least three occasions we have just decided not to bother the police, surveillance cameras did not prove to be a deterrent.

With regard to the excessively high crime rate in Gallup, at least three pods at the local jail were empty in May even though there appear to many individuals who need that room and board. Two years ago, room was held for other municipalities for a fee of ~\$140.00 per day.

Also, a front page article in a local newspaper about Billy and his Willy offended many sensible people But, I think that article was meant to open the eyes of the Public to what appears to be a weak justice system (Prosecutorial and Judicial) in Gallup, excluding the Public Defender's Office (Defenders). The Assistant District Attorney (ADA) didn't think Sheldon Billy needed to be held in jail after a rape and battery conviction, he was released to rape again, imagine that! Could not the Judge in this case overruled that decision by the ADA and kept Sheldon Billy locked up while he awaited sentencing? A Plea Bargain is chocked up as a win for the Prosecutor!

Before coming to Gallup, NM I had never heard of an individual who failed to complete Probation just having it written off as Unsatisfactory(?) with no mention of jail time for that failure to satisfactorily complete probation. This individual went on to be arrested while in the possession of a stolen vehicle.

Nor did I think an individual could discharge a firearm into an occupied residence and only receive probation. Great plea deal between the District Attorney's Office (DA) and Defenders for the criminal for shooting into an occupied residence. Nobody consulted the victims who were surprised by the DA's plea bargain decision.

Or, what about an 8th DWI? The prosecution, defenders and the judge want to find a way to legally mitigate a mandatory 10-year prison sentence for that individual! How many times has this individual driven while under the influence and not been caught by law enforcement?

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Having compassion and looking for ways to rehabilitate individuals is admirable and probably the right thing to do for some offenders.

But, what about compassion for those who are adversely impacted by these individuals who are breaking the law? Newspaper coverage of court events presents the appearance of judicial tolerance of this type of behavior. I think this type of tolerance only encourages criminal behavior. Why not, you can expect leniency.

The Police appear to be the only strong link in the system setup to protect the law-abiding citizens of Gallup. However, the Defenders are certainly doing their jobs and getting good deals for criminals.

Not looking for a sympathy,

Mark Hammond

Gallup, N.M.